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**EXPLORING THE PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS
COUNTERFEIT FASHION PRODUCTS IN HUNGARY**

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – The purchase of counterfeit fashion goods is a continuously growing issue, and focusing just on the supply side is not enough. To decrease the number of purchases, the demand side should be reduced too. But how? To do so, first, we must understand what motivates a person to purchase counterfeit products. The purpose of this study is to determine the factors that influence the demand for counterfeit fashion products.

Design/methodology/approach – This study uses an online self-administered survey to collect data. The data are collected from 214 consumers in Hungary. The survey is built based on the literature using scales that were already validated in former studies. The reliability of the scales is assessed using the Cronbach alpha test, while Bayesian correlation and Bayesian linear regression analyses are employed to test the hypotheses.

Findings – The results show that age (positive relationship) and ethical judgement (negative relationship) are some of the important factors that influence the purchase intention of counterfeit fashion products. Based on the results, older consumers and people with lower ethical judgement tend to have higher purchase intentions toward fake items. Fashion consciousness, value consciousness, self-ambiguity, and subjective norm showed anecdotal evidence to include or exclude them in our model.

Limitations – The study examined only a limited number of independent variables on purchase intention. Moreover, the sample consisted of younger and more educated respondents, which differs from the population.

Practical implications – This paper contributes to informing companies and policymakers about the main predictors of purchase intention towards counterfeits. Educational campaigns to raise awareness about the ethical issues of purchasing counterfeits are suggested.

Originality/value – Unlike most of the research exploring this topic, which uses the frequentist framework and the Null Hypothesis Significance Testing (NHST) method, this study uses the Bayesian framework.

Keywords - Counterfeiting, Counterfeits, Consumer behaviour, Fashion, Hungary, Bayes factor, Branded products

Paper type - Research paper

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INTRODUCTION

Counterfeiting has evolved into a substantial global economic challenge over the past few decades, with its impact continuously escalating. The influx of counterfeit and pirated products poses a significant economic burden on a global scale. It crowds out „billions in legitimate economic activity and facilitates an "underground" economy that deprives governments of revenues for vital public services, forces higher burdens on taxpayers dislocates hundreds of thousands of legitimate jobs, and exposes consumers to dangerous and ineffective products” (International Chamber of Commerce, 2017, p. 5). Despite companies and national governments are increasingly focusing on addressing this issue, counterfeiting seems to be surging at an unprecedented rate (Bian et al, 2016). Utilizing 2019 data, a study conducted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), estimated that the international trade in counterfeit and pirated products reached a volume of USD 464 billion in that year, constituting approximately 2.5% of the total world trade (OECD/EUIPO, 2021). Consequently, the trade volume of counterfeit is significant, rivaling the GDPs of advanced OECD economies like Austria or Belgium. Additionally, this study delved into the European Union's situation. The findings reveal that in 2019, imports of counterfeit and pirated products into the EU reached a staggering EUR 119 billion (USD 134 billion), constituting up to 5.8% of EU imports. The COVID-19 pandemic has also given a boost to counterfeiting. During periods of lockdown, consumers increasingly turned to online marketplaces to fulfill their needs, so counterfeiters have taken advantage of this situation and increased their range of counterfeits online. Frontier Economics’ report predicted a potential surge to \$991 billion by 2022 and the global economic value of counterfeit and pirated goods ranging between \$1.90 to \$2.81 trillion (International Chamber of Commerce, 2017). The global economic value of them was “only” \$0.9 trillion in 2015, so the huge growth is indisputable.

This surge can be attributed to several factors such as globalization and the increasing availability of fakes. Manufacturers realize substantial profit margins through the production of counterfeit products, coupled with consumers actively seeking branded items at affordable price points (Amine, Magnusson, 2007). Counterfeiters are earning well, however, luxury brands alone lose more than \$12 billion every year, because of counterfeit competitors (Bian et al, 2016). The challenge of counterfeiting and piracy has escalated with the opening up of economies, particularly in regions such as Asia and Eastern Europe. Accor-

ding to the OECD (2007), Asia has emerged as the predominant manufacturing hub, witnessing a concerning proliferation of infringed goods ranging from luxury items to those impacting personal health and safety. In 2023, we can undoubtedly say that Asia stands at the epicenter of the counterfeiting dilemma. In the past, identifying counterfeit products was relatively straightforward, primarily involving luxury goods crafted from subpar materials and sold in open-air markets or near tourist attractions. However, nowadays, the purchasing environment has evolved dramatically, with counterfeit products permeating online platforms, posing a threat to virtually every product category—from food and beverages to electronics and pharmaceuticals (Marcketti and Shelley, 2009). This shift has made the detection and mitigation of counterfeiting a more complex and pervasive challenge.

The phenomenon of buying counterfeit products is also present in Hungary, which causes damage to the economy. According to Gyula Pomázi - the former president of the Hungarian Intellectual Property Office (HIPO) and deputy president of the National Board Against Counterfeiting -, counterfeiting can cause up to HUF 300 billion in damage to the domestic economy every year (HENT, 2021). He also added that as a result of the pandemic, the Hungarian population has become more permissive towards fakes. The Táarki Social Research Institute - which is an applied social research center – examined the demand for counterfeit products in Hungary between 2009 and 2021. According to the 2021 Táarki research, similarly to previous years, 79% of Hungarian people would not purchase counterfeit products, 19% said maybe and only 3% stated that they would purchase counterfeits anytime (Táarki, 2021). In previous years there was a tendency that less and less consumers have bought these goods in Hungary until 2020. The proportion of counterfeit product buyers was at its lowest in 2020 (11%), considering the entire examined period; however, compared to this, a 4% increase was observed by 2021. This number is relatively consistent with the result of the research of EUIPO (2023), according to which 13% of Europeans have bought counterfeits intentionally in the last 12 months. There were other similar results, the best-selling counterfeit product in 2021 was again counterfeit branded clothing, which is usually the most popular one around the world as well (Táarki, 2021). Also, similar to last years, the majority of purchases came from the younger generation (people between 18-39) and the consumers, who live in the capital. The EUIPO (2023) study also came to this conclusion as more than a third (37 %) of Europeans aged between 15 and 24 had bought at least one fake product intentionally. What is interesting is that, despite the international trend, the majority of Hungarians bought counterfeits at local markets or on the streets and not through

the Internet (Tárki, 2021). Actually, 80% of the respondents said they purchase fake clothes at local markets or on the streets and only 23% of them mentioned the internet as a source.

The Hungarian government has implemented several initiatives aimed at mitigating counterfeiting from the supply side. These include the establishment of the Hungarian Intellectual Property Office and the National Board Against Counterfeiting, which play a major role in making the fight against counterfeiting as effective as possible (SZTNH, 2022a). Furthermore, the strict monitoring by the National Tax and Customs Administration helps preventing the import of fake products. In 2022, the authorities seized counterfeit goods worth approximately 41 million euros in Hungary (SZTNH, 2023). Managing the proliferation of counterfeit products constitutes one aspect of the challenge, while the other involves decreasing the demand for fake goods. The National Board Against Counterfeiting introduced programs to influence the demand for fake items as well. For example, knowing that the majority of counterfeit purchases are done by the younger generation, they launched a creative competition for high school and higher education students (SZTNH, 2022b). Applicants aged 16-25 could showcase their skills through creating posters or videos with the theme "The Genuine is the Real Deal!" Through their artistic expression, they were required to draw attention to the advantages of products from legitimate sources and make purchasing safe, durable, and legally compliant items appealing and trendy. With this campaign, they also wanted to draw the attention of young people to the fact that by purchasing products from legal sources, they can also make the lives of those around them better. Even though approaches trying to reduce the demand for fakes have already appeared, further steps would be necessary. This entails comprehending the motivations that drive a person to intentionally purchase a counterfeit product.

This research aims to explore consumer behavior concerning the intentional purchase of counterfeit branded fashion items, including clothing, footwear, handbags, fashion accessories, beauty products, and designer jewelry and watches. The reason why the field of fashion was chosen is that the biggest sales losses from counterfeit goods worldwide come from clothing, by number 26,3 billion euros (Statista, 2022). Moreover, this field is widely researched and as it was written before, branded counterfeit fashion items are the best-selling counterfeit products in Hungary, and usually around the world as well. The goals of this research are to find the factors that influence the intention to buy counterfeit fashion products and determine whether there is a difference in response to the factors identified between those who are more likely to purchase and those who are less likely to purchase

counterfeit items. To do that, we use Bayesian Linear Regression. This study tries to replicate the findings of Fernandes (2013) on a Hungarian sample. So, the factors that we examine are: fashion consciousness, ethical judgement, value consciousness, self-ambiguity, and subjective norm.

A few definitions have been used for product counterfeiting in the scientific literature. In this study, counterfeit is defined as “Unauthorized representation of a registered trademark carried on goods identical or similar to goods for which the trademark is registered, with a view to deceive the purchaser into believing that he/she is buying the original goods.” (World Trade Organization, Glossary: Counterfeit Definition, nd). There are two types of transactions involved in counterfeiting. The first, which can be called deceptive, occurs when the buyer doesn’t know he/she purchases a fake product (Wilcox et al., 2009). The second is called non-deceptive, and it means that the customer purchases the counterfeit product on purpose, knowing that it’s fake. This study focuses on non-deceptive transactions, as thanks to the fact that consumers consciously buy a fake product gives a more visible and accurate picture about the motivation. This non-deceptive form of counterfeiting is largely prevalent in branded, especially luxury markets where the consumer can easily differentiate between counterfeits and genuine brands on the basis of tangible characteristics of the brand like distribution channels, price and quality of the product, etc. (Nia & Zaichkowsky, 2000)

Many studies aimed to understand the purchase of counterfeit products in several countries. Tuncel (2022) examined the impact of possession-based happiness, idealism, and the attitude toward the legality of counterfeits on the willingness to buy counterfeit luxury brands in Slovenia and Turkey. Toklu and Baran (2017) tried to reveal the motivations that influence the demand side of counterfeit purchases in Turkey. They checked the impact of fashion consciousness, perceived risk, perceived value, ethical consciousness on attitude towards fakes and willingness to purchase counterfeits of luxury brands. Riquelme et al. (2012) analysed the factors that influence attitudes toward fakes, and the intention to purchase illegal products in a Muslim country, Kuwait. Bian and Moutinho (2009) studied consumer behavior for counterfeits in the UK, while Wilcox et al. (2009) examined social motivations for buying fakes in the USA. In Brazil, de Matos et al. (2007) proposed and tested a model that integrates the main predictors of consumers’ attitudes and behavioral intentions towards counterfeits.

In Hungary very limited number of research aimed to identify the factors influencing counterfeit purchases. This study will hopefully contribute to this research gap and also

encourage further research in this country by providing valuable insights that could empower policymakers, brand owners, and anti-counterfeiting organizations. By understanding the determinants of counterfeit purchases, stakeholders can develop effective strategies to address and diminish counterfeiting from the demand side.

The rest of the paper continues as follows. In the second section, we briefly review the related literature discussing variables that we examine in this research. The third section describes the research methodology including the structure of the questionnaire and analysis plan. We then present the findings of this research. Finally, the last sections of the study discuss the research, its limitations, and likely future research directions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is based on Fernandes's (2013) research, which used Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) as a theoretical framework to explain the purchase of luxury fashion products in the United Arab Emirates. The TPB is a thoroughly investigated conceptual framework that has proven effective at describing and predicting behaviour across a wide variety of fields (Samaddar and Menon, 2021). According to the TPB, buying behavior is influenced by the intention to purchase, which is itself influenced by subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, attitude (Ajzen, 1991), and self-identity (Shaw et al., 2000). Ajzen defined perceived behavioral control as an individual's perception of the ease or difficulty associated with performing a particular behavior (Samaddar and Menon, 2021). Attitude, on the other hand, is delineated as a factor predicting consumer behavior, shaping individuals' inclinations to respond positively or negatively to an object. The TPB has found extensive application in academic literature, particularly in elucidating the connections between beliefs, attitudes, behavioral intentions, and actual behaviors. This theoretical framework has been successfully employed across various fields such as consumer behavior, advertising, public relations, healthcare, and obviously in studies related to counterfeiting (Samaddar and Menon, 2021).

Academic research concentrated on understanding the myriad reasons and factors behind consumers' choices in opting for counterfeit items. Samaddar and Menon (2021) reviewed the literature on counterfeiting (120 research papers) and developed a morphological analysis. According to them, previous research's factors can be divided into 3 main and one additional category. These are product or brand-related factors, societal factors and consumers' psychographic traits and emotions. Within the product or brand category, significant factors include product attributes, the purpose of the purchase, brand personality, and brand prominence. Societal factors, such as social comparisons, social influence, and subjective norms, have garnered attention from the research community. Notably, among these categories, there is a growing emphasis on exploring consumers' psychographic traits and emotions, which have become widely acknowledged and extensively researched. As psychographic segmentation classifies consumers according to their personality traits, values, beliefs, interests, attitudes, and lifestyles, an increasing number of researchers are directing their attention toward investigating aspects such as hedonic consumption, brand consciousness, materialism, perceived risk, ethics, and moral equity. Finally, the last

category contains demographic factors such as gender, age, and income, situational factors, and other new determinants like mindfulness.

This study chooses the research of Fernandes (2013) as a benchmark study, as it is an acknowledged and frequently cited paper that examines factors belonging to different variable categories described in the previous paragraph. Thus, similarly to that research, our study selected fashion consciousness, subjective norm, ethical judgement, value consciousness, and self-ambiguity as factors that are going to be examined.

FASHION CONSCIOUSNESS

Fashion consciousness refers to how much a consumer is interested in and following the latest fashion styles and clothing trends. The likelihood of counterfeiting increases significantly for fashion items associated with well-known or luxury brands, as „their psychological and emotional benefits such as prestige and social status far outweigh their functional and utilitarian benefits such as durability, ease of use, technology, and serviceability.” (Khan, S., Fazili, A., 2019, p 45). Hence, counterfeit suppliers manufacture products of inferior quality. However, by replicating key brand elements like the brand name, logo, and trademark of the authentic brand, they are able to transfer all the psychological advantages linked to the brand without incurring high costs. This means that the buyers get all the symbolic benefits at a lower price, and the counterfeiters can achieve a high profit with these branded fashion items. In the realm of fashion, consumer involvement plays a crucial role in determining the importance placed on clothing trends (Toklu and Baran, 2017). This level of involvement is a key factor influencing consumers to opt for counterfeit fashion products. The rationale behind this behavior lies in the transient nature of fashion products, characterized by their relatively short life cycles and constant evolution due to changing trends. Consequently, many consumers resist spending huge amounts of money on these items, recognizing that they can quickly go out of fashion and lose the “hype”. However, by buying counterfeits they don’t have to pay huge amounts. Therefore, individuals who are highly fashion conscious are more inclined to seek out and purchase fashion counterfeit products as this way they can keep up with the latest trends at a lower price. So, the first hypothesis is:

H1. Fashion consciousness is positively related to the intention to purchase counterfeit products.

ETHICAL JUDGEMENT

Consumer ethics refers to the moral principles, rules, and standards that guide an individual's behavior in the purchasing or selling of goods (Muncy and Vitell, 1992). Key aspects of consumer ethics can include environmental and social responsibility and different rights. Ethical judgement is the cognitive process wherein an individual assesses and decides which course of action is morally right in a given situation (Trevino in 1992). This process of ethical judgement is intricately tied to the behavioral intentions of consumers. When consumers perceive an action as ethically sound, they are more inclined to engage in that behavior. The distinction between what is considered right or wrong significantly influences an individual's consumption patterns (Fernandes, 2013). If a consumer holds the belief that purchasing counterfeit goods is ethically acceptable, they are more likely to make such purchases frequently. According to Norum & Cuno (2011), the majority of consumers engaging in counterfeit product purchases often do not perceive they are doing any harm by that. However, Bian et al. (2016) argue that consumers are generally conscious of the ethical issues, harm, and violations of social order associated with counterfeit consumption, particularly in the luxury brands market. Their hedonic incentives just simply outweigh their ethical concerns. It could mean that people who are more ethical or ethically stable can say no to counterfeit purchases, but less ethical consumers just lower their considerations for ethics or ignore them and purchase fake goods (Hamelin et al, 2013). Also, an individual's ethical stance plays a substantial role in shaping the embarrassment aspect of the decision-making process. Consumers with a strong ethical disposition would experience greater shame if others were to discover their possession of counterfeit items. Consumers who firmly believe that purchasing counterfeit goods is unethical are less likely to engage in such transactions. Thus, the second hypothesis of this study is:

H2. Ethical judgement is negatively related to the intention to purchase counterfeit products.

VALUE CONSCIOUSNESS

Value consciousness refers to a concern for paying lower prices for goods. though subject to certain quality constraints (Ang et al., 2001). This aspect plays a crucial role in the context of counterfeit purchases, as it is linked with the price and the degree to which buyers feel that the product's worth is comparable to the cost they bear (Fernandes, 2013). Consumers, being mindful of value, believe that counterfeit products may exhibit lower

quality compared to their authentic counterparts. However, the appeal lies in the substantial savings achieved through lower prices, thereby categorizing counterfeits of branded or luxury brands as a "value for money" (Furnham and Valgeirsson, 2007). Ang et al. (2001) argued that value consciousness has a positive impact on attitudes towards counterfeiting and piracy, and that consumers who typically buy counterfeit products are more value-conscious and have a lower average income compared to those who abstain from purchasing counterfeit items. Similarly, Bloch et al. (1993) discovered that individuals who buy counterfeit goods generally have lower financial means and are motivated by the perception of price and value. However, Riquelme et al. (2012) have found that surprisingly, individuals at both ends of the income spectrum, those with low incomes and those with high incomes, exhibit heightened interest in acquiring counterfeit goods. What in most research agrees is that the motivation behind purchasing counterfeits is often rooted in the fact that counterfeits of luxury brands typically offer identical prestige or functional advantages as the originals, but without the associated high costs (Bloch et al. 1993). Thus, individuals who prioritize value consciousness are more likely to hold a positive attitude towards acquiring counterfeit items compared to those who are less value conscious (Ang et al., 2001). Therefore, our third hypothesis is:

H3. Value consciousness is positively related to the intention to purchase counterfeit products.

SUBJECTIVE NORM

In accordance with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), the concept of subjective norm plays a crucial role in understanding how the influence of significant others shapes an individual's intentions and behaviors, particularly in the context of purchasing decisions (Penz & Stöttinger, 2005). The subjective norm refers to the consumer's perception of the social influence or pressure directed towards him in relation to the purchase of fake products. This perception is intricately connected to normative beliefs, which represent the consumer's understanding of what influential individuals in their social circle believe regarding whether one should or should not engage in certain acts like in the purchase of counterfeit items. In other words, it involves the individual's assessment of the expectations and opinions of those considered significant in their life – friends, family, colleagues, or any other relevant social groups. The impact of social pressure on consumers' attitudes is contingent upon their susceptibility to such influence (Riquelme et al., 2012). Consumer

susceptibility is influenced by the desire to align or elevate one's image in the eyes of significant others through the procurement and utilization of products and brands. It is also shaped by the readiness to conform to the expectations of others. This social pressure can either influence buyers to follow or to break the rules (Ang et al, 2001). Consequently, the endorsement or disapproval of the behavior by relevant others can either motivate or discourage engagement in such actions. "Thus, the greater the normative pressure from significant others whether to purchase counterfeits or not, the more he/she is likely to purchase them." (Fernandes, 2013, p. 4). Hence, it is expected that:

H4. Subjective norm is a significant factor in the counterfeit purchase intention.

SELF-AMBIGUITY

Self-identity was proposed as an additional determinant of intention (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Sparks & Shepherd, 1992 cited in Penz & Stöttinger, 2005) and used probably first by Penz & Stöttinger (2005) as a factor for the intention to purchase counterfeits. In a later research Fernandes (2013) renamed this factor as self-ambiguity, which expresses its nature better. Self-ambiguity refers to how confident the consumers are about who they really are. Individuals with an unclear and uncertain self-concept often grapple with low self-esteem, making them less confident in meeting perceived societal standards of worthiness. This lack of assurance renders them more susceptible to external influences on how they perceive themselves (Campbell et al., 1991). As a response to these dynamics, individuals in this category may be inclined to acquire prestigious luxury fashion products as a means of refining and enhancing their personality to garner public recognition and show a higher social status (Penz & Stöttinger, 2005). This strategic acquisition is driven by the desire to construct and safeguard their individual identity, self-image, or social character. This pattern of behavior becomes particularly pronounced when the pursuit of prestigious products becomes integral to their self-concept and is consistently repeated over time (Cook et al., 2002; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993 cited in Penz & Stöttinger, 2005). Essentially, the repeated engagement in acquiring branded items serves as a mechanism through which individuals aim to define and validate their individual identity and self-image. Our last hypothesis therefore is:

H5. Self-ambiguity is positively related to the intention to purchase counterfeit products.

METHOD

SAMPLE

A preregistration containing the analysis plan was uploaded to the Open Science Framework (OSF) prior to conducting the analysis. The document is available at <https://osf.io/td26x>. The deviations from this plan are described in the text.

To identify the factors that influence the decisions of consumers when purchasing counterfeit products and to measure their awareness about the effects of counterfeiting, this study used an online self-administered survey. As this is a sensitive topic and responses may be biased, we collect data anonymously to counterbalance this bias.

This study chose the Hungarian market as the context because Hungary was the most accessible and convenient choice. Eisend and Schuchert-Güler (2006) stated that most results come from studies based on consumers in South Asian or North American countries, so this study can contribute to the exploration of less researched areas. Also, Samaddar and Menon (2020) mentioned in their morphological analysis that consumer purchasing patterns differ across regions due to the distinct norms and values inherent in each society. They emphasized that there can be differences between developing, notably Asian countries and developed ones. Taking this into account, it can be seen that most of the research focuses on Asia, so new research focusing on developed European countries would be appreciated to test the previously mentioned difference. As it was mentioned before although numerous studies investigated counterfeits, as far as we are concerned there is not much research on consumers in Hungary.

PROCEDURE

In February 2024, the online self-administered survey was disseminated by convenience sampling through Facebook. The utilization of convenience sampling enabled to choose participants based on factors such as accessibility, availability, geographical proximity, and their willingness to respond (Etikan et al., 2016 cited in Tuncel, 2022). Additionally, this sampling approach has been employed in various studies focusing on luxury consumption and counterfeit goods. The survey was posted via a personal Facebook profile, but in order to reach a more diverse sample, considering age, gender, education, and income, contacts and respondents were asked to share and send the survey to others as well. When respondents clicked on the online survey link, they were directed to a greeting and summary

page, where the researcher outlined the topic of the study. The participation was on a voluntary and anonymous basis, no financial compensation was promised, and no time limits were assigned for the respondents.

STRUCTURE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The survey consists of 39 items in all, which come in a randomized order, and it can be divided into 3 main sections. The first section can be considered the most important one, as it aims to collect the needed data to satisfy the research purpose. It contains 28 statements reflecting each construct by which we tried to find the factors that influence the intention of consumers to buy counterfeit fashion products. This part of the survey was built based on the literature using scales that were already validated in former studies (see them below in the instruments section). Respondents were asked to answer these items on a five-point Likert scale varying from 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree). In this study, no exact counterfeit products were specified, only the category, which was branded fashion counterfeits. This section also contained an attention check, where respondents were asked to choose the second answer option. The aim of this question was to check the comprehensive filling and filter the answers of respondents, who just randomly chose them.

The second part of the questionnaire focused on gathering additional information about the frequency of counterfeit purchases of the respondents and the awareness of consumers about the effects of counterfeiting. This exploratory section included questions like “How many times have you bought fake products?”, “Have you heard that buying fake products can endanger your health or safety, is harmful to the economy, and can also serve to finance terrorism?” or “Have you come across calls warning of the dangers of counterfeiting in the past year?”.

Finally, the last section contains questions related to demographic variables of age, gender, educational background, profession, and income. Moreover, it contained an additional question, which asked the respondents to rate on a five-point Likert scale (1 – Totally understood, 5 – very difficult to understand) how easy they found the questionnaire to understand. Respondents with the answer of 1 were filtered out, as they probably did not understand the items. Also, during the data preprocessing, only complete responses were included in the analysis. A survey response is considered complete if the respondent answers all the questions.

INSTRUMENTS

The questionnaire examines 5 previously defined factors, namely, fashion consciousness, ethical judgement, value consciousness, subjective norm, and self-ambiguity through different scales. The survey was built based on the literature using scales that were already validated in former studies and were English (see them in the next paragraphs). To make the survey easily understandable for the Hungarian citizens, the whole questionnaire was translated to Hungarian by the researcher. Then it underwent scrutiny for any inconsistencies by being translated back into English by a Hungarian peer, who is an English teacher. Here we present each scale in more detail.

Fashion consciousness was assessed using a five-item scale (Bruner and Hensel 1998; Fernandes, 2013). This scale measures an individual's engagement with fashion, incorporating statements such as "While choosing between fashion and comfort, I usually dress for fashion as compared to comfort." and "An important part of my life is to dress smartly.". A higher score on this scale indicates a greater degree of fashion consciousness in the individual.

Ethical judgement was measured by a five-item scale that evaluated an individual's ethical stance regarding the acquisition of counterfeit fashion items (Bian & Veloutsou, 2007; Sparks et al., 1995 cited in Fernandes, 2013). The scale included statements like "I feel tense after purchasing counterfeits." and "I believe that the purchase of fashion counterfeits will affect the business of the original brand manufacturers." A higher score on this scale indicates a greater level of ethical conduct by the consumer.

Value consciousness was assessed through a four-item scale designed to examine the extent to which an individual prioritizes the notion of the "value of money" (Lichtenstein et al., 1990). "When I shop, I compare the prices of different brands to be sure I get the best value for money" and "When purchasing a product, I always try to maximize the quality I get for the money I spend" are examples of questions that were used to measure this factor. A higher score on the value consciousness scale indicates a greater consumer concern regarding the trade-off between price and quality.

Subjective norm was evaluated through a five-item scale designed to assess the extent to which an individual values the opinions of others regarding their appearance (Bearden et al., 1989; Fernandes, 2013). Statements like "It is important that others like the products and brands I buy." and "I rarely purchase the latest fashion styles until I am sure my friends approve of them." were employed to measure this construct. A higher subjective norm score indicates a greater level of concern on the individual's part regarding the opinions of others.

Self-ambiguity was measured using a six-item scale for self-concept clarity aiming to assess an individual's confidence in determining who he is and his self-esteem (Campbell et al., 1996). The scale consisted of statements such as " Sometimes I feel that I am not really the person that I appear to be." and " I spend a lot of time wondering about what kind of a person I really am.". Moreover, unlike the other scales, this one contained 2 reverse-keyed items: "I seldom experience conflict between the different aspects of my personality." and "In general, I have a clear sense of who I am and what I am". A higher score on this measure indicates lower levels of self-esteem for the individual.

Purchase intention consisted of a three-item scale (de Matos et al., 2007; Fernandes, 2013). This scale measures an individual's intention to purchase a fashion counterfeit using statements like "I am keen to purchase branded fashion counterfeits." and "I think about a counterfeited fashion product as a choice when buying something.". A higher score in the purchase intention indicates an increased likelihood of purchasing counterfeit products.

GROUPING BASED ON PURCHASE INTENTION AND ANALYSIS PLAN

First, we analysed the whole sample, then the sample was divided into two groups. In accordance with the literature, the groups were identified based on the mean scores of purchase intention after calculating the average scores for all scales (Fernandes, 2013). Consumers with an average score above 3.5 were considered as more likely counterfeit purchasers (MLCP), while people with a mean score of 3.5 or under this were categorized as less likely counterfeit purchasers (LLCP). To check the robustness, we also checked the results of the analysis using a cutoff point of 3 after 3.5.

The analysis plan of this study was preregistered, however there are minor deviations from this plan. In the preregistration it was mentioned that an Exploratory Factor Analysis would be conducted, but as our research is confirmatory and the scales were validated in former research, simply a reliability analysis of the scales was done. Then unlike most of the research exploring this topic, which used the frequentist framework and the Null Hypothesis Significance Testing (NHST) method, this study used the Bayesian framework with the help of JASP. An examination of the interconnections among the six variables was carried out through Bayesian correlation analysis. Then we conducted Bayesian Linear Regression with JZS prior (r scale of 0.354) that assigns normal distribution to each regression coefficient (Andrzejewicz et al., 2015) and Beta binomial (a=1, b=1) model prior with

purchase intention serving as the dependent variable and fashion consciousness, ethical judgement, value consciousness, subjective norm, and self-ambiguity as the independent variables.

CALCULATING BAYES FACTORS

Bayesian inference has a different framework that has several advantages compared to NHST. Rather than making binary "accept or reject" determinations concerning a null hypothesis, Bayesian inference operates by quantifying the evidence for competing hypotheses based on observed data (Faulkenberry et al., 2020). Hypotheses that effectively predict the data gain greater support, while those that poorly predict the data experience diminished support. Thus, the Bayes factor shows „the likelihood of the data under the alternative hypothesis. Bayes factors greater than 1 indicate relative evidence for the null hypothesis, whereas Bayes factors smaller than 1 indicate relative evidence for the alternative hypothesis” (Aczel et al, 2018, p 359). In contrast to the p-value, there are no universally established criteria for determining when a Bayes factor offers a satisfactory level of evidence. However, this study uses the most commonly used guideline, which was recommended by Jeffreys (1961 cited in Faulkenberry et al., 2020): Bayes factors between 1/3 and 3 are considered anecdotal evidence, while between 3 and 10 (or between 1/3 and 1/10) indicate moderate evidence, and finally Bayes factors greater than 10 or smaller than 1/10 shows strong evidence.

Unlike in the case of NHST, the sample size is not an issue for the Bayesian approach (Field, 2018). It is not needed to determine the amount of data to collect before conducting the analysis. The timing of data collection or the specific rules governing its collection do not affect the process, as any new data pertinent to your hypothesis can be employed to revise your prior beliefs regarding both the null and alternative hypotheses. However, to have a guess about how many responses would be required, a power analysis was conducted using G*Power software. The effect size was calculated based on the research of Fernandes (2013), as it had the smallest r^2 (0.22) compared to other research, such as the study of Toklu and Baran (2017). As Figure 1 shows, the needed smallest sample size for this research would be 52 with an 80% power. However, to make sure we have enough evidence we calculated the sample size again with a moderate (0.15) effect size. This way the smallest sample size would be 92.

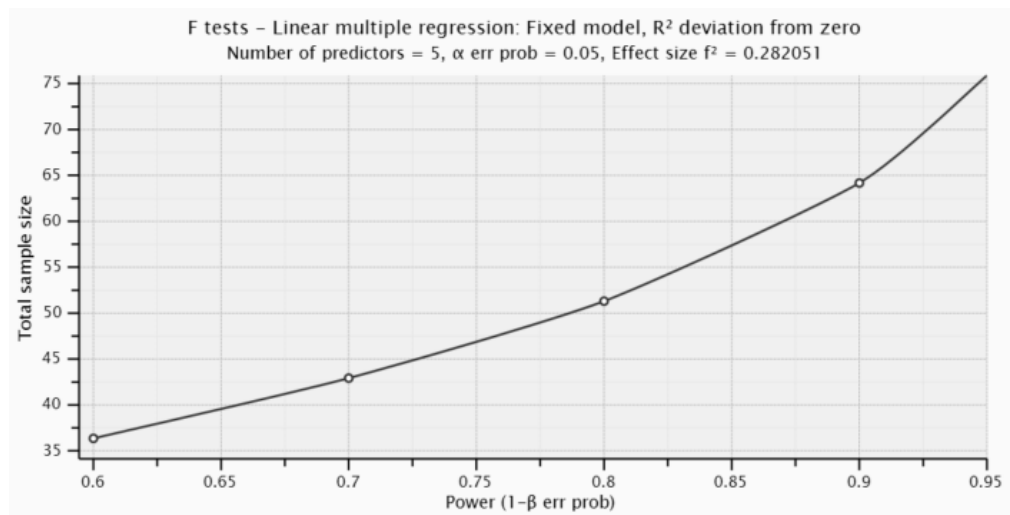


Figure 1. Power analysis of the research

RESULTS

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

A total of 227 individuals completed the online self-administered survey, of which 214 were included in the analysis after data cleaning. 12 respondents were excluded as they failed on the attention check and 1 respondent was excluded as she considered the survey very difficult to understand. This final sample consisted of 54 men (25.2%) and 160 women (74.8). About 57 percent of the respondents were between 20 and 40 years old, 35.5 percent between 41 and 60, and 7.5 percent were more than 60 years old. The average age was 38. The participants exhibited higher levels of education compared to the general population, with 74.8 percent holding a university degree. 62.6 percent of the respondents were employees, 17.3 percent were students and the rest contained for example entrepreneurs and pensioners. Concerning personal income, 30 percent of the respondents stated that they have a net income between HUF 300.001 and 450.000, 19.6 percent of them had between HUF 150.001 and 300.000, 16,4 percent of the individuals had between HUF 450.000 and 600.000, followed by 11.2 percent of the respondents, who received an income over HUF 600.001, and finally only 7.5 percent stated that they had an income under HUF 150.000. The rest of the individuals did not want to share their income.

The second section of the survey showed that 59.3 percent of the sample had purchased counterfeit branded fashion items, where 40.7 percent of them have bought these items 1-2 times so far, 9.3 percent of them bought counterfeit branded fashion products approximately once a year and 9.3 percent have purchased more than one item yearly. Also, 19.2 percent of the individuals responded that they don't know how many times they have purchased counterfeits. Respondents were also asked if they've seen any warnings about the dangers of counterfeiting in the past year. 48.6 percent of them have not met, 16.4 percent have not known, and only 35 percent have seen some warnings. Moreover, it was surprising that only 53.3 percent of the sample stated that they were aware of the fact that buying fake products can endanger their health or safety, is harmful to the economy, and can also serve to finance terrorism. Finally, they were asked if, despite this information, they would be willing to buy fake fashion products in the future. Here, 22.4 percent picked "yes" and 28.5 percent of the respondents chose "don't know", which can be considered a relatively high share of the sample.

The reliability of the scales was analysed by checking their internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha). Table 1 provides the mean scores and corresponding Cronbach's alpha values

for each variable. While values over 0.70 are mostly preferred, in the literature scales with lower Chronbach's alphas were used as well (e.g. de Matos et al., 2007) and even Toklu and Baran (2017) stated that values over 0.60 are satisfactory. According to our results, our scales can be considered relatively reliable.

	Items	α	Total sample μ	MLCP μ (n=44)	LLCP μ (n=170)
Fashion consciousness (FC)	5	0.83	2.08	2.00	2.10
Ethical judgement (EJ)	5	0.66	2.71	2.39	2.79
Value consciousness (VC)	4	0.75	3.91	4.02	3.88
Subjective norm (SN)	5	0.72	2.15	2.17	2.15
Self-ambiguity (SA)	6	0.60	2.15	2.23	2.13
Purchase intention (PI)	3	0.79	2.37	4.06	1.94

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for variables

CORRELATION ANALYSIS

The two-tailed Bayesian correlation between the variables corresponded to our assumptions. The result is given in Table 2. As can be seen, there is very strong evidence in favour of the alternative hypothesis (there is a correlation) between fashion consciousness and subjective norm. The Bayes factor here is 4.515×10^{11} , meaning that it is 4.515×10^{11} more likely that fashion consciousness and subjective norm are related than not. This is a moderate correlation, which might suggest that consumers, who value other's opinions more, may tend to pay more attention to their looks and clothes. They may also feel compelled to conform to societal norms regarding fashion choices. Fernandes (2013) has also found a significant correlation between these two factors. There is also very strong evidence for a correlation between subjective norm and self-ambiguity, which may mean that the less the people know who they are and the lower their self-esteem is, the more important other's opinions to them about themselves. We also have strong evidence for the relationship between purchase intention and ethical judgement, which may give us a hint that ethical judgement can be a factor that significantly influences the purchase of fake branded fashion items.

Bayesian Pearson Correlations

Variable		FC	EJ	VC	SN	SA	PI
1. FC	Pearson's r	—					
	BF ₁₀	—					
2. EJ	Pearson's r	0.314***	—				
	BF ₁₀	4791.695	—				
3. VC	Pearson's r	-0.019	0.137	—			
	BF ₁₀	0.089	0.622	—			
4. SN	Pearson's r	0.493***	0.223*	0.103	—		
	BF ₁₀	4.515×10 ⁺¹¹	18.056	0.265	—		
5. SA	Pearson's r	0.123	0.026	-0.119	0.445***	—	
	BF ₁₀	0.420	0.092	0.378	1.037×10 ⁺⁹	—	
6. PI	Pearson's r	-0.060	-0.269***	0.079	0.067	0.136	—
	BF ₁₀	0.124	224.633	0.164	0.137	0.607	—

* BF₁₀ > 10, ** BF₁₀ > 30, *** BF₁₀ > 100

Table 2. Correlation matrix of variables

BAYESIAN LINEAR REGRESSION

To check the influence of the independent variables on the purchase intention 3 regressions were conducted. First of all, one regression was done for the whole sample, which is followed by the method of Fernandes (2013), where we divided the sample into MLCP and LLCP groups. The results are provided in Table 3, 4, and 5. Moreover, an additional regression was conducted, where we checked the impact of demographic variables, namely gender, age, and income on purchase intention. The result showed anecdotal evidence for including income in the model (BF_{inclusion} = 1.893, posterior mean = -0.078), moderate evidence for gender (BF_{inclusion} = 4.352, posterior mean = 0.313), and strong evidence for including age in the model (BF_{inclusion} = 48.283, posterior mean = 0.018). This means that the data have increased the prior odds for containing age as a predictor by a factor of 48.283. Also, the posterior means indicate that men have a higher purchase intention and the older the consumer is the higher their purchase intention is towards counterfeit fashion items.

As Table 3 shows, considering whole sample the largest posterior probability is seen in the model, where ethical judgement, value consciousness, and self-ambiguity were used as predictors. So, our data are most likely under this model. Here, our BF_M is 10.74, meaning that after observing the data, the odds in favour of the model including the previously mentioned three predictors have increased by a factor of 10.74. The BF₁₀ is 797.12, which is very

strong evidence for the alternative model compared to the null model. The R^2 value shows that this model explains 11.1% of the variation in purchase intention. Lower R^2 values are common in this field and it do not hinder a model from being informative for theory testing (Rights & Sterba, 2019 cited in Tuncel, 2022).

Model Comparison - PI

Models	P(M)	P(M data)	BF _M	BF ₁₀	R ²
Null model	0.167	0.002	0.010	1.000	0.000
EJ + VC + SA	0.017	0.154	10.743	797.124	0.111
FC + EJ + VC + SN + SA	0.167	0.150	0.886	77.861	0.114
EJ	0.033	0.109	3.553	282.428	0.072

Posterior Summaries of Coefficients

Coefficient	P(incl)	P(excl)	P(incl data)	P(excl data)	BF _{inclusion}	Mean	SD	95% Credible Interval	
								Lower	Upper
Intercept	1.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	1.000	2.374	0.074	2.226	2.524
FC	0.500	0.500	0.339	0.661	0.513	-0.002	0.059	-0.142	0.153
EJ	0.500	0.500	0.997	0.003	332.403	-0.349	0.087	-0.534	-0.181
VC	0.500	0.500	0.623	0.377	1.653	0.094	0.098	-0.006	0.283
SN	0.500	0.500	0.473	0.527	0.897	0.058	0.101	-0.061	0.305
SA	0.500	0.500	0.665	0.335	1.983	0.145	0.140	-0.002	0.422

Table 3. Bayesian linear regression on the whole sample

To gain additional information about all the possible predictors in the linear regression model and to help us determine, which predictors should be included in the model, we have to check the posterior summary of coefficients. The outcomes were determined through Bayesian model averaging (in later regressions too), which merges the support for incorporating a specific predictor by averaging through the models containing that predictor. In other words, we consider both the uncertainty surrounding the parameter within each individual model and the uncertainty surrounding the models themselves (Faulkenberry et al., 2020). Faulkenberry et al. (2020, p. 248) also stated that „this is a good approach to estimation, as it alleviates the need for the researcher to pick one model as “the winner”, and instead, provides estimates that incorporate both levels of uncertainty (within models and across models) “. In the posterior summary table, it can be seen, that ethical judgement produces $BF_{inclusion} = 332.403$. This means that the data have increased the prior odds for including ethical judgement as a predictor by a factor of 332.403. In other words, the observed data are 332.403 times more likely under the alternative hypothesis than the null hypothesis. This is strong evidence to include this predictor in our model. So, this result supports

H2. However, the other independent variables showed only anecdotal evidence to include or exclude them from the model. This evidence indicates that only ethical judgement influences the purchase intention of counterfeit branded fashion products when taking into account the whole sample. This predictor has a posterior mean of -0.349, meaning that if the average score gained on the ethical judgement scale increases by one unit, the average score achieved on the purchase intention scale decreases by -0.349 units.

Table 4 summarizes the results for the LLC sample and shows that our best model is the one that contains ethical judgement and self-ambiguity. In the posterior summary, unlike in case of the whole sample, ethical judgement produces a $BF_{inclusion}$ of 4.852, which only indicates moderate evidence to include this parameter in our model. The predictor's posterior mean is -0.150, so it kept the negative sign, meaning that the more ethical the consumer is the less likely they purchase fakes. The rest of the predictors showed anecdotal evidence to exclude or include them in our model as their Bayes factors ranged between 1/3 and 3.

Model Comparison - PI

Models	P(M)	P(M data)	BF_M	BF_{10}	R^2
Null model	0.167	0.097	0.535	1.000	0.000
EJ + SA	0.017	0.132	8.969	13.641	0.073
EJ	0.033	0.124	4.115	6.423	0.046
FC + EJ + VC + SN + SA	0.167	0.116	0.659	1.204	0.088

Posterior Summaries of Coefficients

Coefficient	P(incl)	P(excl)	P(incl data)	P(excl data)	$BF_{inclusion}$	Mean	SD	95% Credible Interval	
								Lower	Upper
Intercept	1.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	1.000	1.937	0.059	1.826	2.043
FC	0.500	0.500	0.333	0.667	0.500	-0.019	0.055	-0.163	0.051
EJ	0.500	0.500	0.829	0.171	4.852	-0.150	0.092	-0.278	0.000
VC	0.500	0.500	0.384	0.616	0.623	0.026	0.052	-0.030	0.145
SN	0.500	0.500	0.380	0.620	0.612	0.033	0.071	-0.066	0.195
SA	0.500	0.500	0.612	0.388	1.575	0.110	0.115	-0.002	0.318

Table 4. Bayesian linear regression on the LLC sample

Table 5 shows the results for the MLCP sample and indicates that our null model has the highest posterior model probability. By checking the posterior summary, it can be seen that in the MLCP sample, all the predictors indicated anecdotal evidence to exclude them. This means that we could not find a decisive relationship here between the dependent and independent variables.

Model Comparison - PI

Models	P(M)	P(M data)	BF _M	BF ₁₀	R ²
Null model	0.167	0.300	2.147	1.000	0.000
FC	0.033	0.112	3.656	1.863	0.100
FC + EJ + VC + SN + SA	0.167	0.067	0.360	0.224	0.164
SN	0.033	0.057	1.764	0.955	0.065

Posterior Summaries of Coefficients

Coefficient	P(incl)	P(excl)	P(incl data)	P(excl data)	BF _{inclusion}	Mean	SD	95% Credible Interval	
								Lower	Upper
Intercept	1.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	1.000	4.062	0.063	3.925	4.177
FC	0.500	0.500	0.470	0.530	0.887	0.050	0.070	-0.010	0.207
EJ	0.500	0.500	0.300	0.700	0.429	-0.019	0.049	-0.164	0.049
VC	0.500	0.500	0.298	0.702	0.424	0.018	0.051	-0.043	0.180
SN	0.500	0.500	0.347	0.653	0.532	0.029	0.065	-0.058	0.217
SA	0.500	0.500	0.269	0.731	0.367	-0.009	0.045	-0.150	0.073

Table 5. Bayesian linear regression on the MLCP group

Our main results were robust to the use of a different cutoff point and priors. The robustness was tested by changing the cutoff point of the initial 3.5 to 3. The same regression was conducted and the results did not show significant differences. By using the cutoff point of 3, in case of the variables showing previously anecdotal evidence, they showed moderate evidence supporting the null hypothesis. It means that by lowering our cutoff point, we got stronger evidence for the lack of influence of these variables on the purchase intention of counterfeits. Not only the cutoff point but the model prior was changed as well from the beta binomial to uniform, where all the models had the same prior probability. The results of the regression did not change significantly in this case either. Therefore, our results were robust to the use of different priors as well.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research yielded different results from some previous studies (Fernandes, 2013, Riquelme et al., 2012). First of all, at first glance, the sample can be considered a bit biased towards consumers under 40 years old. In the context of pricier or branded fashion products, a sample comprising university students and young working adults may be deemed insufficient due to the typically lower incomes and spending habits of young individuals (Morra et al., 2018). Nevertheless, this age group has been frequently examined in counterfeiting research and remains a focal point for both counterfeit and luxury fashion brands. This age group presents an intriguing sample as these individuals begin to earn their own income during this specific life stage, which is often insufficient to afford higher-end fashion products or luxury items. Consequently, their inclination to purchase counterfeit goods is notably high. Past studies have also affirmed that individuals aged 18 to 39 constitute the largest consumer base for counterfeit products in Hungary (Tárki, 2021). However, this research faced the opposite. As, it was mentioned in the previous section, age was a factor that showed strong evidence for the influencing purchase intention of consumers. The results actually showed a positive relationship between purchase intention and age, meaning that older people are more likely to purchase counterfeit branded fashion items. Similarly, Phau et al. (2001) found that younger people in Hong Kong purchase fewer counterfeit goods and Riquelme et al. (2012) argued that older people (above 45 years old) in Kuwait have a higher intention to purchase counterfeits. However, many researchers like de Matos et al. (2007) in Brazil or even Fernandes (2013) in UAE have not found significant differences in the scores of the scales with demographic variables. In our results, we had moderate evidence for gender influencing purchase intention, meaning that men surprisingly are more likely to purchase fake fashion products. Contrary to this, Wah-Leung and Prendergast (2006 cited in Riquelme et al., 2012) stated the opposite. Based on these results organizations should focus not only on younger consumers, but on older ones too. The difference between results may come from the differences between the characteristics of the samples but it can also indicate cultural differences that further studies should consider.

Based on our results, ethical judgement is an important variable in predicting purchase intention towards counterfeit fashion items. Considering the total sample this variable showed strong evidence for including it in our model, and even in the LLPC group, it indicated moderate evidence. However, in the MLCP group, we've seen only anecdotal evidence. This result may indicate that in case of consumers, who are less likely to purchase

counterfeits ethical judgement is a strong deterrent factor, but it doesn't affect people that much, who are more likely to purchase fakes. For them, this deterrent factor does not seem strong enough to stop them from buying fakes. All in all, according to our results enhancement of ethical judgement probably results in a decline in counterfeit purchases. This result is supported by several scholars like Toklu and Baran (2017), Riquelme et al. (2012) and, Fernandes (2013), who conducted research in different countries. This result gives a tool to companies and governments that fight counterfeiting, and this tool is education and informing consumers.

Educating consumers is crucial in changing perceptions to improve their ethical judgement that reduces the demand for counterfeit goods. Fashion luxury brands, organizations, and governments must focus on informing buyers about the unethical nature of purchasing fake products. A sustained campaign is needed to emphasize the dangers and effects of counterfeiting. As the results revealed, at the moment in our sample 46.7% of the respondents were not aware of the fact that buying fake products can endanger their health or safety, is harmful to the economy, and can also serve to finance terrorism. This number indicates that the consumers are poorly informed and there is still a huge potential in the education. According to the INTA report (World Intellectual Property Review, 2019), 91% of Gen Z individuals demonstrated a willingness to adjust their perspectives based on new information. Additionally, 52% expressed intent to reduce their consumption of counterfeit products in the future. These findings suggest that the younger generation is open to education about the adverse consequences of buying counterfeit goods and may reconsider their purchasing habits. This presents a potential straightforward solution to the issue, as educating consumers could lead to a decrease in demand (Cesareo and Stöttinger, 2015; Mera-viglia, 2018). Brands could use their websites or various platforms to provide education on the impacts of counterfeiting and even organise media campaigns. In the past, we could see campaigns targeting this issue in Hungary, such as the previously mentioned "The Genuine is the Real Deal!" creative competition (SZTNH, 2022b). Furthermore, we could see international examples like the public awareness campaigns run by the International Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition (IACC, 2011 cited in Fernandes 2013). However, they do not pursue enough media campaigns as 48.6 percent of the respondents have not met, 16.4 percent have not known if they have seen any warnings about the dangers of counterfeiting in the past year. This aspect presents a significant opportunity for governments, companies, and industry groups combating counterfeiting. These stakeholders should start more campaigns to raise awareness about the economic and moral implications of buying counterfeits.

To increase ethical judgement, programs like the IACC's, which expose the links between counterfeit purchases and supporting child labor and organized crime, can be highly impactful.

Remarkably, this study has not found substantial evidence to support that fashion consciousness, value consciousness, subjective norm, and self-ambiguity are related to the likelihood of purchasing counterfeit fashion products. Moreover, aside from ethical judgement, no significant differences were identified between the LLCP and MLCP groups, as all other variables showed anecdotal evidence. This inconsistency with existing literature, which asserts the pivotal role of these variables in counterfeit purchasing behavior (Toklu and Baran, 2017; Riquelme et al., 2012), shows also that we could not replicate the findings of Fernandes' (2013) totally. However, Fernandes (2013) employed the NHST method, focusing solely on regressions within the LLCP and MLCP groups, neglecting the analysis of the total sample. Our findings prompt consideration of additional variables impacting counterfeit purchase intentions, given the lack of compelling evidence to include these factors in our model. Hence, it suggests that counterfeit purchase intentions in Hungary may be influenced by other factors. Potential explanations for the disparity in results may stem from cross-country variations, including cultural differences, which can be an interesting research topic in the future. Additionally, differences in sample composition may have led to variations in consumer behavior. However, to find the exact reason behind the differences between the results further investigation is required.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This research has certain limitations, yet it also presents opportunities for future research. First, the study examined only a limited number of independent variables on purchase intention. Future research could consider a wider range of variables and even examine the intercorrelations between the independent variables that this study has found. Second, the study primarily involved a young Hungarian, predominantly female, and more educated sample (74.8 percent have university degrees), which does not accurately represent the population. Consequently, the sample's characteristics may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Future studies should aim for larger and more diverse samples, concentrating on a broader diversity of population groups from several locations and cultures. These limitations are typical for the online self-administered survey method with its convenient sampling. Due to this method, respondents' answers were limited to predefined options. Future research might consider using in-depth interviews in order to understand consumers better and let them explain their opinions in a more interactive way. Furthermore, this study did not specifically investigate the influence of consumers' lifestyles or personal values on their purchasing intentions. Therefore, future research could delve into these aspects to provide a more comprehensive understanding. Another limitation of this research is its focus on purchase intention rather than actual behaviour. While intention serves as a significant predictor of behavior, this study cannot make definitive conclusions about actual behaviors (Tuncel, 2022). Thus, future research may focus on behaviour. Finally, the current study focused on branded fashion items. Future research may expand on the examination of other product categories that are often affected by counterfeiting dynamics, like electronic equipment, software, or medicines.

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APPENDIX

1.APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE

1. An important part of my life is to dress smartly.
2. While choosing between fashion and comfort, I usually dress for fashion as compared to comfort.
3. It is important to me that my clothes represent the latest trends.
4. I usually have more than one outfit of the latest fashion style.
5. It is important for people to dress in the latest styles.
6. Other people's views about me are important.
7. I am usually anxious about creating a good impression to the public.
8. I rarely purchase the latest fashion styles until I am sure my friends approve of them.
9. It is important that others like the products and brands I buy.
10. I like to know what brands and products make good impressions on others.
11. I think counterfeits have a negative impact on the economy.
12. I believe that the purchase of fashion counterfeits will affect the business of the original brand manufacturers.
13. I feel tense after purchasing counterfeits.
14. I feel guilty after purchasing counterfeits.
15. I tend to avoid any negative information and collect positive information about anything I purchase.
16. I am very concerned about low prices, but I am equally concerned about product quality.
17. When purchasing a product, I always try to maximize the quality I get for the money I spend.
18. I generally shop around for lower prices on products, but they still must meet certain quality requirements before I will buy them.
19. When I shop, I compare the prices of different brands to be sure I get the best value for money.
20. My beliefs about myself often conflict with one another.
21. I spend a lot of time wondering about what kind of a person I really am.
22. Sometimes I feel that I am not really the person that I appear to be.
23. I seldom experience conflict between the different aspects of my personality.
24. Even if I wanted to, I don't think I could tell someone what I'm really like.
25. In general, I have a clear sense of who I am and what I am.

26. I am keen to purchase luxury fashion counterfeits.
27. If given the opportunity, I would not miss the chance to purchase luxury fashion counterfeits.
28. I think about a counterfeited fashion product as a choice when buying something.
29. How many times have you bought counterfeit branded fashion products?
30. Have you seen any warnings about the dangers of counterfeiting in the last year?
31. Have you heard that buying counterfeit products can endanger your health or safety, harm the economy and finance terrorism?
32. Despite this information, would you still be willing to buy a counterfeit in the future?